

## Meal Service Study Sheet

### Basic Table Setting

#### **Setting the table influences:**

- appearance of the food served
- sets the tone/feeling of the meal
- makes people feel important

#### **There are three components of a place setting:**

- Dinnerware—plates, cups, bowls, saucers, platters and other serving pieces
- Flatware—butter, dinner and steak knives; salad/dessert, dinner forks; soup, dessert and teaspoons
- Glassware—water goblet, milk and wine glasses, and sherbet glass

**Cover** - arrangement of a place setting for one person; dinner plate is generally in the middle of the cover. Allow 20 -24 inches of space for each cover.

**Set the table with what is needed for the meal. Flatware is arranged in the order it is used, starting at the outside and working toward the center.**

#### **There are 6 rules in proper dinnerware placement:**

1. Allow 20-24" for each place setting with the plate in the middle.
2. The rule of thumb: the plate should be 1" from the table edge (use thumb).
3. Bread/butter plate—top left, above the salad plate.
4. Salad plate—lower left, above the napkin.
5. Soup bowl—on plate or separate.
6. Cup/saucer—separate or glassware.

#### **There are differences in flatware:**

1. Soup spoon—larger than teaspoon
2. Salad/dessert fork—smaller than dinner fork
3. Butter knife—shape and size smaller than dinner knife

#### **There are 4 rules in proper flatware placement:**

1. Also a rule of thumb—place items 1 to 1 1/2 " from the table edge so that handles are lined up and the utensils are even with the plate.
2. Forks—to the left of the plate; dessert fork is sometimes placed above the center of the plate  
Knives, spoons—to the right of the plate; dessert spoon is sometimes placed above the center of the plate
3. Arrange flatware in order of use, from outside toward plate—(salad fork at the left of the dinner fork if the salad is the first course, otherwise, to the right of the dinner fork if the salad is served with dinner)

4. Forks—tines up  
Knives—sharp cutting edge toward plate  
Spoons—bowls up  
Butter knife—on bread/butter plate

**There are rules of glassware placement:**

1. Water goblet at the tip of the knife blade.
2. Other beverage glasses at right of goblet and slightly forward in a diagonal. NOTE: cup and saucer—lower right.
3. If glassware contents are cold, serve with saucer to catch moisture condensation.

**Placement of the napkin:**

1. Left of the forks
2. Center of the dinner plate or cover
3. In the water goblet

**The napkin is placed so that when it is removed, it will not disturb any of the flatware!**

**Etiquette**

**Table etiquette** - courtesy shown by good manners at meals. Table manners reflect part of your personality to others; makes eating a pleasant experience for everyone, most rules of etiquette involve common sense and consideration of other people.

**Common Rules of Etiquette:**

- Sit down from the left side of your chair
- Assist with passing of foods when appropriate; pass to the **right**
- Use flatware from the outside in
- Napkin
  - place on lap before starting to eat; cover your mouth and nose if you must cough or sneeze
  - leave on your chair if leaving the table and returning during a meal
  - leave to the left of the plate when finished with the meal
- When eating with a small group wait until everyone is served before eating
- Follow actions of host/hostess as a guide when dining in someone's home
- Avoid talking with food in your mouth; chew with your mouth closed
- Cut food into pieces as you eat; cut into small bite-size pieces; but meat one bite at a time
- Sit up straight; avoid leaning on elbows while eating

- Place spoon on soup plate rather than the bowl/cup when finished eating
- Place the knife and fork on the plate with the handles parallel to the edge of the table when finished eating
- Break one piece of bread/roll and butter one piece at a time
- Place butter on your own plate before buttering your bread/roll

**Summary:**

If you apply basic principles of setting the table, table service and manners you can create a pleasant atmosphere so that your relationships and appearance of food are enhanced. Good manners show respect for others.

Besides eating, these things should also be taking place at the table:

- Communication via conversation
- Relationship development
- Values development (I care enough to spend time with you)
- Exchange of ideas